



Name: _____ Date: _____

YOUR MISSION: THE TIME-TRAVELING REPORTER. Your press pass works in any century—and your editor wants the story of how 13 small colonies defied the most powerful empire on Earth. Watch the episode, then execute the tasks as you take on more responsibility.

Level 1 | CUB REPORTER—Build Your Files

Reporters are only as good as their facts. As you watch, match each name or date to its meaning—write the letter in the blank.

1. ____ Why the colonists came	A. Lived in America long before any Europeans arrived
2. ____ Native Americans	B. The day the 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence
3. ____ Thomas Jefferson	C. Religious freedom, political freedom, escape from persecution, and economic opportunity
4. ____ July 4, 1776	D. Wrote the Declaration of Independence
5. ____ 1783 Treaty of Paris	E. Essays by Hamilton, Madison, and Jay (“Publius”) that helped get the Constitution approved
6. ____ The Federalist Papers	F. The agreement in which Britain finally recognized U.S. independence

Level 2 | FIELD REPORTER—Why They Fought

Your editor won’t print “it was unfair.” For each British action, report the principle it violated—the freedom being ripped away.

The British action	The freedom it violated
Parliament imposed high taxes on the colonists—who had no representatives and no say in passing them.	_____
The British government suppressed anti-British newspapers.	_____
Colonists were forced to provide housing for British soldiers—without their consent.	_____



Garbled transmission! Your telegraph mangled the most famous sentence in American history. Restore the five missing words using the word bank: **Creator • equal • Happiness • Liberty • Rights**

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created _____, that they are endowed by their _____ with certain unalienable _____, that among these are Life, _____ and the pursuit of _____."

Level 3 | CORRESPONDENT—The Decision of 1776

Philadelphia, July 1776. Two delegates give you opposite counsel before the vote. Commit to one—then read what happened. No peeking.

THE CAUTIOUS DELEGATE: "Declaring independence is madness—thirteen scattered colonies against the greatest empire on Earth. And the king calls that paper treason: sign it, and you sign your own death warrant."

THE BOLD DELEGATE: "Our rights come from God, not from kings—no government gave them, and none may take them. Britain is ripping our freedom away. Some things are worth risking everything for."

My counsel (circle one): DECLARE INDEPENDENCE / WAIT AND NEGOTIATE —**because:**

NOW READ WHAT HAPPENED: On July 4, 1776, representatives of all 13 colonies—fearing for their lives—adopted the Declaration of Independence. Victory was far from certain; the war raged seven more years. But in 1783, with the Treaty of Paris, Britain recognized American independence. Against all odds, America had won.

Level 4 | EDITOR-IN-CHIEF—The Front Page

File the story of the century: a headline and a 3–5 sentence dispatch on the Declaration's adoption. Include all three—check each box as you use it:

☐ What the Declaration did ☐ Where rights come from ☐ What the signers risked

HEADLINE: _____

The quill is in your hand: ☐ I sign. ☐ I do not sign. **Because:**

Rank achieved: ☐ Cub Reporter ☐ Field Reporter ☐ Correspondent ☐ Editor-in-Chief

Answer Key | Early U.S. History

Level 1 | Cub Reporter

1-C, 2-A, 3-D, 4-B, 5-F, 6-E

Level 2 | Field Reporter—Why They Fought

1. **Taxation without representation.** The colonists had no say—no representation—in the taxes imposed on them; the government must rest on the consent of the governed. Look for “no representation/no consent,” not merely “taxes were too high.”
2. **Freedom of the press (and speech).** Silencing newspapers meant colonists could not speak or publish their minds without fear.
3. **Consent and the security of the home.** Forcing families to house soldiers without consent invaded their homes and property—a grievance later answered in the Bill of Rights.

Garbled transmission (in order): equal, Creator, Rights, Liberty, Happiness.

Level 3 | Correspondent—The Decision of 1776

1. **The counsel:** either choice is acceptable *if the reasoning engages the real stakes*—the near-hopeless odds and the charge of treason on one side; God-given rights and freedoms being stripped away on the other. Mark down answers that ignore the risk entirely.

Level 4 | Editor-in-Chief—The Front Page

Dispatches will vary. Mark student responses correct if the dispatch accurately reports (1) what the Declaration did—announced the colonies’ independence from Great Britain, proclaiming a new nation; (2) where rights come from—given by God, not by government, “for the first time in world history” the founding ideal of a nation; and (3) what the signers risked—their lives, since the king considered it treason. The signature choice is the student’s own; grade the reason, which must engage both the risk and the cause. Look for headlines that capture the event, not just “Big News in Philadelphia.”

Note: This worksheet can be completed with the episode alone or as part of the full lesson—see the accompanying lesson plan.